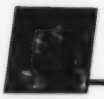
Traditional Knowledge Annual Report

2009-2010

Northwest Territories

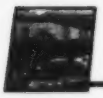
Table of Contents

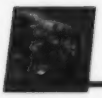
Introduction - *pg. 1*


Education, Culture and Empoyment - *pg. 5*

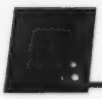
Environmental and Natural Resources - *pg. 9*

Municipal and Community Affairs - *pg.17*


Public Works and Services - *pg. 23*


Justice - *pg. 25*

Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations - *pg. 29*


Transportation - *pg. 31*

Health and Social Services - *pg. 35*

Industry, Tourism and Investment - *pg. 39*

Northwest Territories

Introduction

Whether it's listening to elders share traditional forest management practices, teaching Aboriginal languages and culture in schools or providing culturally relevant care in northern hospitals, the Government of the Northwest Territories incorporates Traditional Knowledge into how it serves residents.

Traditional Knowledge is the knowledge and values that have been acquired through experience and observation, from the land or spiritual teachings, and handed down from one generation to another.

The Government recognizes that Aboriginal Traditional Knowledge is a valid and essential source of information about the natural environment and its resources, the use of natural resources, and the relationship of people to the land and to each other, and incorporates traditional knowledge into government decisions and actions where appropriate.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) was given responsibility for coordinating government-wide Traditional Knowledge initiatives.

The Interdepartmental Traditional Knowledge Working Group, led by ENR, has compiled Traditional Knowledge initiatives each department has undertaken during the 2009-2010 fiscal year and compiled them in a report, GNWT Traditional Knowledge Annual report 2009/10.

Background

In 1997, the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) established a Traditional Knowledge Policy.

The Traditional Knowledge Policy calls upon the GNWT to adhere to the following principles:

- the primary responsibility for the preservation and promotion of traditional knowledge lies with Aboriginal people;
- government programs and services should be administered in a manner consistent with the beliefs, customs, knowledge, values and languages of the people being served;
- traditional knowledge should be considered in the design and delivery of government programs and services;
- the primary focus of traditional knowledge research should be the Aboriginal community;
- traditional knowledge is best preserved through continued use and practical application;
- oral tradition is a reliable source of information about traditional knowledge
- To improve the use of Traditional Knowledge in government programming and service delivery, the GNWT has identified the following strategic initiatives, all of which are addressed in the Traditional Knowledge Policy Implementation Framework:
- better overall government coordination of Traditional Knowledge Policy implementation;
- more consistent orientation, awareness, and training opportunities relating to Traditional Knowledge;
- development of stronger and more effective collaborative relationships with the holders of traditional knowledge through their Aboriginal governments, cultural institutes, and resource management agencies;
- greater acknowledgement and promotion of successful traditional knowledge initiatives;
- ongoing departmental support and guidance to personnel when implementing Traditional Knowledge;

- clear commitment of the resources required to implement the Traditional Knowledge Policy; and
- measures to monitor and report on traditional knowledge implementation initiatives.

Department Involvement

For this report, nine departments submitted details on Traditional Knowledge initiatives undertaken in 2009-2010.

- Environment and Natural Resources
- Health and Social Services
- Industry, Tourism, Investment
- Justice
- Education, Culture and Employment
- Transportation
- Municipal and Community Affairs
- Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations
- Public Works Services

However, the GNWT recognizes that some departments and agencies have a greater obligation and a greater opportunity than others, to incorporate traditional knowledge into their programs and services.

All departments have participated fully in the Interdepartmental Traditional Knowledge Working Group and in the development of the GNWT Traditional Knowledge Implementation Framework.

These include:

- Executive
- Human Resources
- Housing Corporation
- Legislative Assembly
- Finance
- Financial Management Board Services

Education, Culture and Employment

Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) plays a vital role in Traditional Knowledge by ensuring the memories of the past are preserved for new generations to use in the future. Traditional Knowledge and practices are incorporated into programs and services in a variety of ways.

For example, ECE incorporates traditional methods of observation and research as well as scientific methods in its Adult Literacy and Basic Education program. As well, the NWT Teacher Education Strategy is founded on northern Aboriginal values, which Aurora College and other divisions of ECE use to build a collection and directory of culture-based resources. Through the strategy, funding support is available for a variety of traditional programs.

At the post-secondary level, Aurora College provides Traditional Knowledge training, promotes cultural understanding and awareness, and on-the land experiences in programs such as its Bachelor of Education, Environment and Natural Resources Technology, Aboriginal Language Cultural Instructor, Community Education Preparation, and Social Work programs. It also offers instruction in Aboriginal languages, drum making, mitt making and Traditional Knowledge camps in everything from trapping to wellness and marine ecosystems. Cultural awareness promotion and support activities such as bannock and tea events, hand games tournaments, wellness and healing workshops are also an integral

part of campus life. Aurora College's Aurora Research Institute, was an active participant in Traditional Knowledge-based research during the International Polar Year, which sought to demonstrate the connections between Traditional Knowledge and scientific research.

ECE demonstrates it commitment to Traditional Knowledge by fully supporting culture and language-based education in early childhood and in the school system. This is reflected in a number of initiatives, such as Language Nests, an early childhood development strategy where Aboriginal Languages are used for all learning activities for young children. Other programs, like Dene Kede and Inuuqatigiit lessons guide the integration of language and culture into curriculum development. As well, NWT schools set aside two days at the beginning of each school year to orient new teachers to the culture of the community in which they are teaching.

By providing funding to regional Aboriginal organizations, ECE also acts upon its commitment to preserve, revitalize, maintain and protect Aboriginal languages. This in turn, preserves and revitalizes Traditional Knowledge.

The Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre works to preserve, promote and enhance the arts and the cultural heritage of the NWT. Programs are delivered directly, through partnerships with other agencies, and by funding individuals and organizations. These projects range from science camps and cultural projects, to developing, preserving and sharing its collections of photographs, artifacts, clothing and more from across the NWT.
The NWT Archives was also active in preserving photographs from across the NWT and audio recordings from the Tłı̨chǫ, Chipewyan, Gwich'in, and North Slavey languages. It also preserved music from well-known South Slave Métis fiddler, Angus Beaulieu.
Museum education programs and activities involved developing travelling exhibits, edukits and delivering school and community programs using traditional Aboriginal knowledge and perspectives. Several exhibits were also opened, updated, or hosted in 2009-10, including "Kuukpak: An Exhibition of Inuvialuit Artifacts" and "We were so far away... The Inuit Experience of Residential Schools."

ECE also provides advice on protecting archaeological resources, manages the archaeological permit system, the Geographical Names Program, and Territorial Historic Sites.
Recently, a significant archaeological discovery by ECE archaeologists resulted in a rich partnership between high school students, Dene elders and scientists. It became known as "Hunters of the Alpine Ice: The NWT Ice Patch Study.

"Hunters of the Alpine Ice: The NWT Ice Patch Study"

In 1997, a group of sheep hunters in the mountains of the Yukon discovered a black band below a large patch of ice. Upon investigation, they discovered a strong compost smell of caribou dung. In the area, they discovered a small piece of wood that looked like a dowel with a string tied around it. Upon further research in Whitehorse, it turned out to be a 4,300 year-old dart shaft made from birch, with a sinew string. This discovery spawned a whole new field of archaeology, called Ice Patch Archeology.

For millennia, caribou have travelled to the ice patches on the north face of mountains up to the 1,800 m (6,000 feet) level for heat and insect relief. And where caribou go, the Shuhtaot'ine (Mountain Dene) followed to hunt.

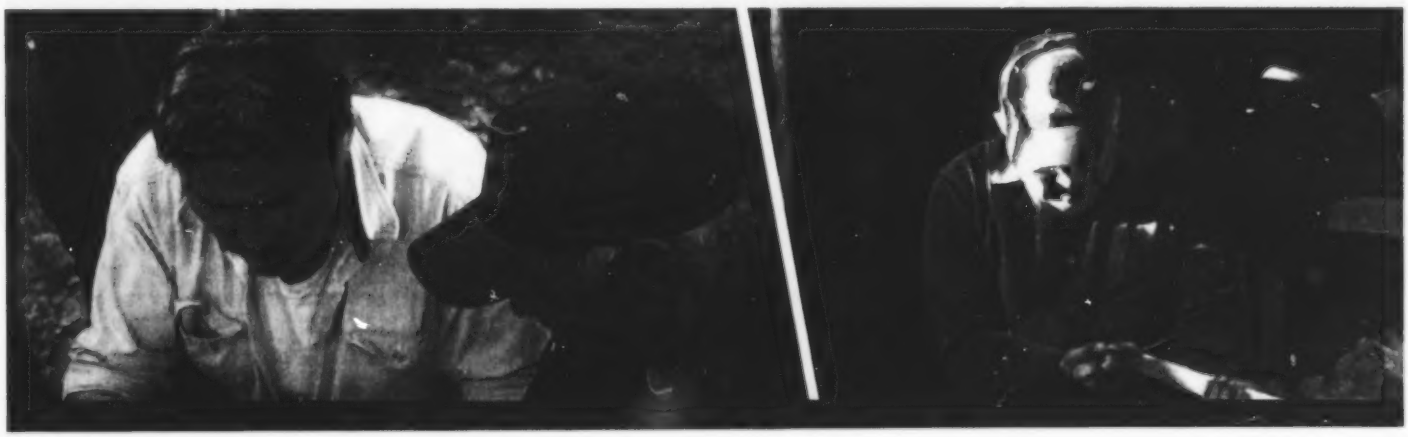
In 2000, with no funding for exploration to find these sites in the NWT, archaeologists used existing satellite imagery and air photos to see if the same thing was occurring in the NWT. A promising site was found in the Tulita District. In 2005, with only four hours of helicopter time, scientists found the remains of a willow bow at the site, which was dated to about 340 years ago. This important discovery led to International Polar Year program funding for research over the next four years.

ECE partnered with the Tulita Dene Band, with the participation of elders and students, to conduct the research. In 2007 and 2008, the project sponsored science camps, which brought high school students, elders and scientists together to share their knowledge and experiences. At one science camp, students and elders travelled by helicopter with scientists from the base camp to one of the ice patches. This allowed scientists a unique opportunity to sit with skilled hunters to discuss how, 500 years ago, armed only with a bow and arrow or a spear thrower and darts, a hunter could successfully harvest caribou in the area.

There are now eight confirmed ice patch sites and another 12 that are being monitored for artifacts as the warming climates slowly melts the existing ice. Over the course of four seasons, well-preserved bow and arrow technology that is under 1,000 years old and spear throwing technology that dates back as far as 2,400 years ago was discovered in a remarkably well-preserved state. One such artifact is a foreshaft, a part of a spear thrower, which was identified as being made of Saskatoon berry wood. This is believed to be the first archaeological finding of Saskatoon berry wood in the NWT. Traditional Knowledge has proven invaluable in this research and science has provided a direct link to the oral tradition of Yamoria, who is famous for chasing the last of the giant beavers out of the NWT. In one story, Yamoria was directed by an elder to gather Saskatoon berry canes to make arrows.

The Ice Patch Study is of interest to other scientific and Traditional Knowledge disciplines as well (DNA studies of caribou, parasites, plant, pollen, insects, etc.) which could help assess caribou health over the millennia and hence, affect modern caribou management programs.

To commemorate the end of the International Polar Year research funding, the book Hunters of the Alpine Ice: The NWT Ice Patch Study was produced as a special gift for the schools in Tulita and Norman Wells. Found artifacts from the study were packaged and taken to the schools to launch the book in November 2009. This book by Tom Andrews, Glen Mackay and Leon Andrew (a respected Tulita elder) is a wonderful example of the power of the collaborative spirit.



Environmental and Natural Resources

Traditional Knowledge is used on a daily basis at Environment and Natural Resources (ENR). The forests, waters and wildlife have always been of great importance to Aboriginal people of the Northwest Territories. That's why ENR actively seeks Traditional Knowledge from elders, experienced hunters and youth alike. ENR incorporates traditional ties to the land and the important connections among our forests, waters and wildlife in all its programs, services and legislation.

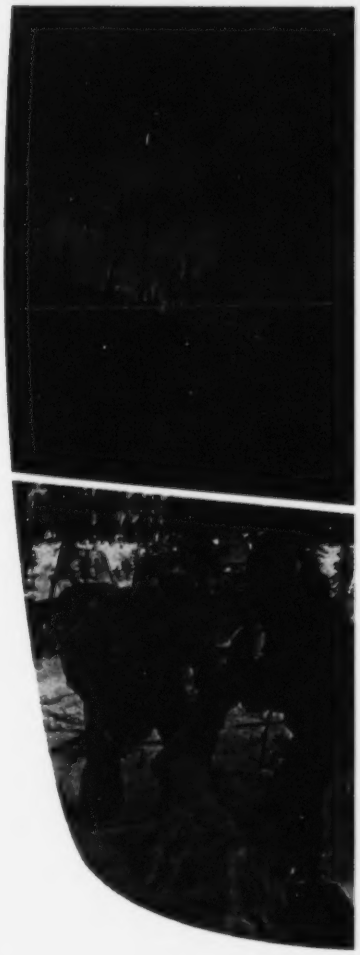
In addition to providing programs and services to the public, ENR also works with other governments on matters related to its lands, waters, forests and wildlife. Northern Voices: Northern Waters NWT Water Stewardship Strategy highlights knowledge-based decision-making, bringing traditional knowledge and western science, to understand ecosystems. ENR participates in these and other monitoring initiatives being designed to track changes in the environment. In all cases, ENR promotes monitoring programs that include biological indicators as well as physical or chemical indicators. This can ensure that there will be early signals of unacceptable changes to traditionally valued ecosystem components, such as aquatic furbearers and their food, even if changes are not being detected in other indicators. Traditional knowledge helps define what those indicators could be and how they could be monitored. ENR participates in a monitoring program that is taking a strong lead to involve First Nations in monitoring in the Peace-Athabasca Delta, upstream from the important Slave River Delta.

ENR is also a member of the Mackenzie River Basin Board (MRBB), which has two contractors working towards the development of the next State of the Aquatic Ecosystem Report. One contractor has primarily science-based knowledge and the other has Traditional Knowledge. Together, they will compile information to feed into the overall report.

The NWT Protected Areas Strategy (PAS) recognizes that Traditional Knowledge and conservation science can work together to protect the natural and cultural values of the land better than either system of knowledge could do alone. In community meetings, PAS staff and members of the steering committee use translators and translation equipment to ensure that the exchange of traditional and scientific knowledge is not lost to either party. Aboriginal communities use their Traditional Knowledge to identify areas they want to protect through the PAS process. Working Groups also use Traditional Knowledge when making recommendations on boundaries, level of protection and monitoring and management options for the area.

Through the PAS, the GNWT has developed products that incorporate Traditional Knowledge – including a new website, which includes a section about how Traditional Knowledge is used in the PAS process. The PAS Grade 7 Lesson Plan and Experiential Science Teacher's Resource Manual interweaves Traditional Knowledge with western science.

Research projects offer ENR another opportunity to use Traditional Knowledge. In the North Slave Region for example, elders and community members help graduate students as they study vegetation and caribou habitat after a fire and during caribou and wolf studies. In the Deh Cho, the Boreal Caribou Collaring Project relied heavily on Traditional Knowledge. Community members and leaders shared information on historic caribou movements and how the people used caribou in the past. They also identified areas where they preferred no collaring activity – so as not to disturb their hunting grounds.



ENR uses Traditional Knowledge in its Forest Management operations. Traditional harvesting of berries and other plants is incorporated into harvest assessments for some logging applications. Traditional Knowledge is used in locating specific stands of trees, identifying history of local vegetation and organizing logging activity.

As ENR makes fire management decisions, community members provide important information about fire history, trapping areas that were burned, and the subsequent effects. During fire season, community members advise firefighters about forest conditions. Staff, including firefighters, make tactical decisions using their own Traditional Knowledge about expected wind shifts. They use Traditional Knowledge to plan strategies and ensure safety. Traditional Knowledge is also used in researching fire history, identifying the effects fire has on the land and on wildlife . It is used in regional planning and public information sessions.

Community members provide knowledge of possible contaminated sites and suggestions on traditional methods used to clean them up and information on traditional values that need to be protected or restored during site remediation to the Environmental Division. In the South Slave, ENR is involved with the Peace Athabasca Delta Environmental Monitoring Program, which incorporates Traditional Knowledge from community members in decision-making and scientific reporting. Traditional Knowledge is used to determine the history of certain areas, including identifying sites where contaminants and other environmental damage may not be visible, but are still in the soil.

Traditional Knowledge is contributing to a broader understanding of the impacts of a changing climate. Information passed down through

generations provide stark comparisons of how the climate is changing and how the land, water and wildlife are responding to these changes.
Traditional Knowledge is gathered regularly during environmental assessments, for example during an assessment of a timber cutting application. Community members are able to identify areas that are culturally sensitive or spiritually significant.

ENR's Wildlife Division held two workshops in October 2009 in Yellowknife to review information on the status of caribou and discuss options for recovery of caribou in the North Slave region. Each workshop included a presentation on traditional knowledge of caribou cycles. Community participants also shared their traditional knowledge. A workshop report was provided to the Wek'eezhii Renewable Resources Board as part of the information provided for the public hearing on the joint ENR/Tlicho Government proposal on management of caribou in Wek'eezhii.

The Wildlife Division also held its annual 10-day cross-cultural science camp at the Daring Lake Research Station on the tundra in late July and early August 2009. The camp provides 12 students and three teachers from across the NWT an opportunity to learn both traditional and scientific knowledge about wildlife, geology, ornithology, archaeology and human history. Respected elders also take part, sharing stories and skills to participants.

Enforcement Officers rely on education to get their conservation message across, but enforcement in the communities relies on patrolmen and wildlife check station monitors hired from their communities. They work as liaisons between the communities and the region. Information on historical animal movements, mineral licks, good fishing spots and campsites help officers with enforcement patrolling.

When the GNWT created a no hunting zone for Bathurst Caribou, ENR began assisting communities to plan and implement hunts to help with resulting hardships. Elders and hunters play a part in the planning process, reconnaissance survey and the hunts themselves. In all regions, harvesters regularly report information on

diseases, injured/nuisance wildlife and climate change-related events. Hunters discuss animal sightings, routes for access, disease observations, and animal health with ENR staff. Hunters provide personal experiences and stories from elders when sharing their Traditional Knowledge.

Hunters share their Traditional Knowledge on travelling on the land, sacred areas, thin ice and traditional use campsites, among other skills. Traditional Knowledge helps to identify which areas ha e abundant wildlife and game animals.

Trapping Programs use Traditional Knowledge. Trappers provide insight about trapping conditions to ENR staff, both in the office and on the land. Harvesters and officers share their Traditional Knowledge in trapper training programs. In addition, ENR is an active participant in the Take a Kid Trapping Program with the Departments of Municipal and Community Affairs and Industry, Tourism and Investment.

Traditional Knowledge is a major component of on-the-land school activities. At its Bliss Lake camp, in the North Slave Region, ENR teaches youth basic emergency survival skills, including how to build shelters, set snares, fishnets and traps and how to prepare pelts. Local elders attend the camps to help teach traditional

methods. In the Deh Cho, students take part culture and ecology camps each year. Students participate in activities that teach traditional aspects of forest ecology, medicinal plants, traditional food preparation and wilderness survival. ENR staff, facilitators and elders ensure that traditional and scientific skills are represented in a balanced way.

In the South Slave Region, Traditional Knowledge is used in schools during on-the-land activities. Officers and elders work together to demonstrate camp set up, harvesting, preparing wildlife for food and storage (i.e. making dryfish and drymeat).

Traditional Knowledge is also demonstrated in the South Slave at public activities such as Culture Week, where camps/tents are set up near the community for different activities such as making dryfish and drymeat, tanning moose hides, cooking over a fire. Even the process of setting up shelters, tents and emergency shelters is demonstrated. Enforcement Officers are active participants during these events.

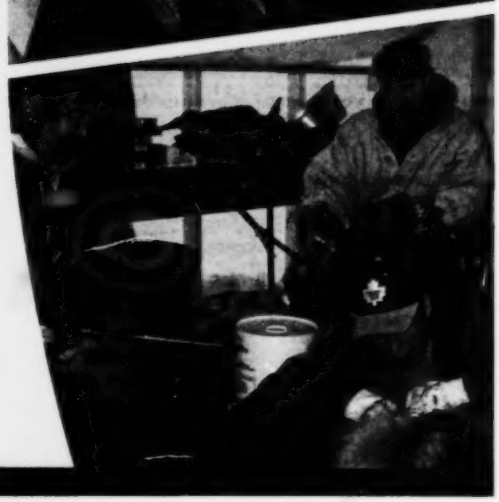
ENR staff in the North Slave Region distribute harvest calendars to hunters to help collect Traditional Knowledge. Hunters record their harvests and observations during the year. After the season is over, the harvest numbers are collected in a door-to-door campaign.

"Fort McPherson Education and Culture Program"

In the Mackenzie Region, traditional knowledge has always being a part conservation education programs implemented in this region. The Hunter Education and Culture Program – a program developed by ENR's Inuvik Region in 1997 – provides youth with an opportunity to learn and experience their culture and language while on the land. Educationally, the goal of this program is to improve hunting practices among young Aboriginal hunters who harvest from the Porcupine and Bluenose (Cape Bathurst, East and West) caribou herds.

With help from respected Fort McPherson hunters and community members, and in partnership with the Tetlit Gwich'in Renewable Resources Council, the Conservation Education Officer from ENR's Inuvik Region brought the Hunter Education and Culture Program to Fort McPherson's youth in September of 2008. Over three to five days of on-the-land training and hunting, students learned to hunt safely and responsibly.

The base camp was situated at the site of the Midway Music Festival, making use of the kitchen building, in addition to several frame tents for sleeping. Over the course of the three-day harvest, seven students and several Fort McPherson community members participated in training sessions that incorporated western and traditional approaches. Among others, they learned how to field dress and prepare caribou meat. They also learned about bear safety, on-the-land survival skills, animal biology, and wildlife management practices. Eight caribou bulls were harvested and the camp was considered a great success by both the community and ENR– and a meaningful learning experience for the students.



Northwest Territories

Municipal and Community Affairs

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs'(MACA) vision is to support capable, accountable and self-directed community governments providing a safe, sustainable and healthy environment for community residents.

MACA's activities fall under the following functions: Land Administration, Office of the Fire Marshal, Emergency Management, Consumer Affairs, Licensing, Legislation, Community Governance support and advice, and Sport, Recreation, Youth and Volunteerism.

While MACA does not deliver any immediate Traditional Knowledge programs, Traditional Knowledge is considered in the delivery of a number of its programs and services. Traditional Knowledge plays an integral role in MACA's involvement in sport, recreation and community government.

The School of Community Government offers a variety of courses in governance, management, lands and recreation that incorporate Traditional Knowledge. Many certificate programs offered through the School identify Traditional Knowledge as a competency. For example, the Northern Recreation Leadership, Northern Recreation Activities and Traditional Games, and Sports Coaching modules of the Community Recreation Leadership Program specifically include Traditional Knowledge components. In addition, Training and Development Coordinators are available to help community governments plan and build capacity using Traditional Knowledge.

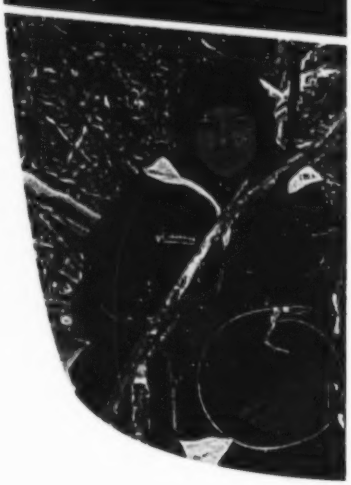
During community consultations or meetings on infrastructure and environmental planning, community members often share their Traditional Knowledge. MACA's Community Operations staff work to include and accommodate involvement of elders during consultations about new initiatives, programs, policies and legislation. Furthermore, Charter Communities may structure their council and their decision-making processes so that they follow traditional governance customs, models and approaches.

With the implementation of the New Deal, MACA's role and involvement in community infrastructure has changed. Now, municipal governments take the lead in planning for their infrastructure, so that Traditional Knowledge can continue to be woven into the fabric of the community.
MACA consults with Aboriginal organizations in unsettled land claim areas when considering leasing or selling Commissioner's Land. Interim Measures Agreements allow Aboriginal organizations to include and use Traditional Knowledge when bringing forward recommendations.

When proposing new policy initiatives, MACA takes steps to consult with Aboriginal organizations, and is respectful of recommendations put forward that are based on Traditional Knowledge.

Traditional Knowledge also plays a role in land use planning. The use of Traditional Knowledge can result in the particular design of a community, using information based on family groupings and historical uses of the land. Traditional Knowledge is used when naming and identifying areas in a community, explaining the importance of sites, encouraging or prohibiting certain activities in certain areas (for example areas for picking berries), or allowing for the traditional structures (teepees) on residential lots.

The use of Traditional Knowledge studies has become common practice



for resource development projects. For example, the environmental assessment of the Mackenzie Gas Project (MGP) was a public process and relied heavily on Traditional Knowledge. As a result, MACA and other GNWT departments were able to use Traditional Knowledge when responding to MGP-related issues. Access to Traditional Knowledge from community hearing transcripts was valuable in developing the Government's Response to the Joint Review Panel Report.

At the Sport, Recreation and Youth Division, Fun (with a capital "F") is injected into Traditional Knowledge. The Division supports and encourages youth to step into leadership roles, try them on, and see how well they fit.

For example, the Youth Centres Initiative encourages and supports NWT youth in initiatives that encourage positive lifestyle choices in their communities. MACA encourages and supports the development, promotion and delivery of traditional Aboriginal youth activities to help preserve and strengthen northern Aboriginal cultures and traditions. The Youth Contributions Program helps fund activities such as traditional Aboriginal cultural events, school-related extracurricular activities, trips, and the development of youth-related organizations.

Examples of projects funded under the Youth Contributions Program that include Traditional Knowledge elements include: Summer Language Camp (Paulatuk), Youth Drumming Workshop (Tsiigehtchic), Fish Harvesting Project (Fort Good Hope), Fish camp (Gamètí) or the Spring Fish Camp (Fort Smith).

The NWT Youth Corps Program helps organizations offer structural and varied programs providing outdoor, cultural, environmental, educational, work, life and personal growth experiences that challenge, engage,

reward and recognize youth. Some examples of projects funded under the NWT Youth Corps are the Arctic Youth Leadership Program, Kole Crook Fiddle Camp, Northern Youth Abroad (co-funded by ECE), Science Camps, trips along traditional travel routes, the Youth Traditional Arts Program (Fort McPherson), the Ivvavik Field Program (Inuvik), Walking in Both Worlds (Fort Liard), Naxehcho Youth and Elder Gathering (Fort Simpson), and the Tlicho Traditional Caribou Conservation Program (Behchoko). Traditional knowledge is an integral aspect in all funded programs.

The Aboriginal Sport Circle of the NWT (ASC NWT) promotes and enhances community wellness and cultural awareness through sport and recreation. ASC NWT works with the National Aboriginal Sport Circle of Canada to promote and deliver courses using the Aboriginal Coaching Manual, North American Indigenous Games (NAIG), Tom Long Boat Awards, Aboriginal Coaching Awards, National Aboriginal Hockey Championship, and other Provincial/Territorial and National Sport Body Initiatives.

"Inuit and Dene Games at the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games"

Dene Hand Games at Canada's Northern House during the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games

Inuit and Dene Games demonstrate the strength of Aboriginal culture and show traditional ways people used to have fun on the land. Today, the games are an important vehicle for transmitting these traditional values to the younger generations. MACA sponsored Inuit and Dene Games athletes to demonstrate their traditional sports as part of the Vancouver 2010 Olympics and Paralympics Traditional Games Program. This program was organized through MACA, in partnership with the Northern Games Society and the Aboriginal Sport Circle of the NWT.

Attending and performing at the Vancouver Olympic Games, like all ideas of greatness, began with a dream. In 2005, a delegation from MACA went to an annual meeting of all Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Ministers across Canada. One of the guest speakers was John Furlong, CEO of the Vancouver Olympic Committee (VANOC), who talked about the Committee's desire to make the 2010 Winter Olympics and Paralympics truly "Canada's Games." He spoke of a vision of an event where every province and territory would be an active participant. What could it mean for the NWT? How exciting would it be if a way could be found to somehow showcase traditional Dene and Inuit Games? And how great would it be to bring NWT youth as volunteers to Vancouver in 2010?

At that time, it seemed like an impossible dream, but over the next two years, MACA staff worked with their colleagues in Nunavut and the Yukon to promote pan-territorial participation at the 2007 Canada Winter Games in Whitehorse. The Youth Ambassadors program was born and traditional games took on a greater focus. In 2007, an agreement was signed with VANCOC to promote pan-northern participation during the Vancouver 2010 Winter Games.

Three more years of hard work and preparation made that dream a reality. In all, a delegation of 23 Dene and Inuit Games athletes and 34 Youth Ambassadors attended the Games. The idea behind the program was to provide selected NWT youth with an opportunity to build leadership skills through volunteer assignments at the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, and in doing so act as youth ambassadors for the NWT at the Games.

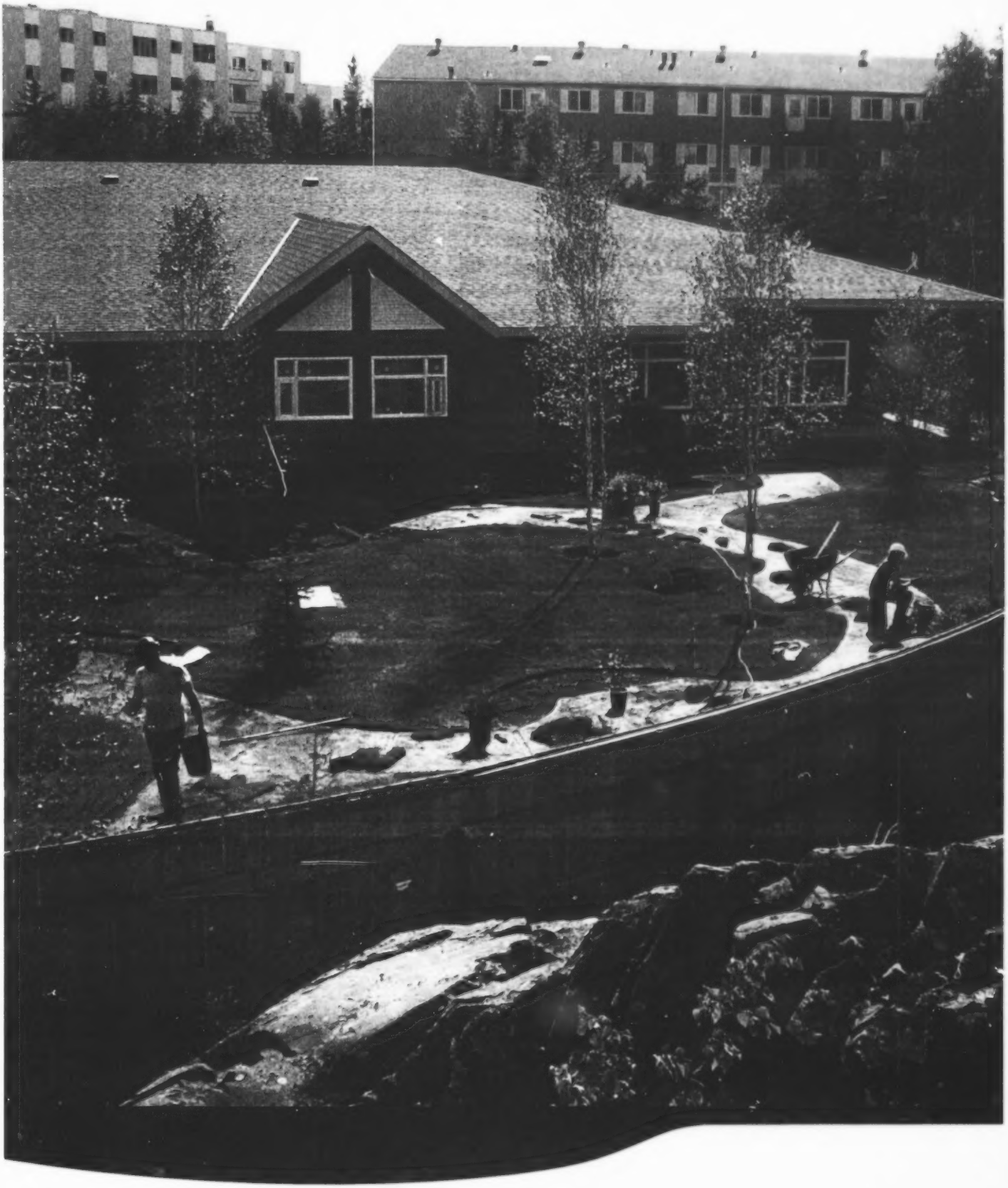
Karis Gruben demonstrates the swing kick at Canada's Northern House during the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.

Part of the traditional games demonstrations included "Street Teams." These teams were made up of traditional games demonstrators and members of a marketing team. Their job was to promote Canada's Northern House and the North. They travelled to busy venues in downtown Vancouver and demonstrated a variety of traditional games to wow the crowd, bombard spectators with postcards about the North, and encourage people to try out the games. Dene Games included: finger pull, pole push, stick pull, and hand game. Inuit Games included: one-foot high kick, two-foot high kick, Alaskan high kick, knuckle hop, airplane, head pull, musk-ox Fight and the famous blanket toss.

Each day, an e-newsletter, called "the Blurb" was published on "proud2bnwt.ca", a GNWT website for youth. Dene and Inuit games athletes, youth ambassadors and others shared their experiences. One such entry, by Andy McKay, sums up why featuring the Inuit and Dene Games at the Olympics was such an important experience for our leaders of tomorrow:

"Wow!! What a week!! I'd just like to share a couple of stories that have made my Olympic experience one to remember. The day we went to Grouse Mountain to demonstrate the Dene Games will stand out in my mind for a while. As we were demonstrating the pole push and were persuading the public to participate, a few people from Uganda, Africa, joined in to try the game. They managed to win the only push they participated in, and the joy in their faces made me feel proud to be Dene. They all seemed to enjoy themselves.

Another experience I want to share was at a West Vancouver school where we were performing and showing the children the basics of the Dene hand games. On the very last rotation, after all the kids had passed through, this one little red-headed girl, probably about 5 or 6 years old, was hiding the coin from this little boy who was trying hard to figure out which hand the little girl was hiding her coin in. She must have fooled him 7 or 8 times in a row until he finally caught her. The little boy seemed to be getting angrier and angrier with every wrong guess and the little girl was getting more excited every time she fooled him. I'll never forget that moment of my Olympic experience. To see our Dene Games being enjoyed by so many children made me feel like it was all worthwhile."



Public Works and Services

The Department of Public Works and Services has participated fully in the Interdepartmental TK Working Group and in the development of the GNWT TK Implementation Framework. While PWS does not have specific programs for the use of Traditional Knowledge, it incorporated Traditional Knowledge when developing and updating the 2009 edition of Good Building Practice (GBP) for Northern Facilities.

"Good Building Practices for Northern Facilities"

The Good Building Practice guidebook provides information on designing and constructing quality buildings for the NWT. The guidebook contains several sections that emphasize the use of Traditional Knowledge. For instance, community history, activities and priorities are important considerations when choosing a site and designing a new building. One section of the GBP deals with these considerations. It emphasizes that the building must incorporate recognizable local symbols and its form and structure should complement that of other traditional and community buildings. It also notes that the building should allow occupants to continue local traditions of access and use.

Using community knowledge of climate and geography is another important element in the GBP. Community members can point out sites that are sacred, gathering places or favourites for fishing or hunting. Community members will also recognize sites that are unsuitable for building, due to wetness or instability. Snow-drifting, spring thawing and flooding patterns are important considerations for a builder to learn from the community.

Another way in which Traditional Knowledge is considered in the GBP is in its emphasis on sustainability and energy efficiency. Buildings that are well built, energy-efficient and minimize the use of fossil fuels use resources sparingly and therefore preserve the land and water for future generations.

Justice

The justice system in the NWT has changed greatly over the years in the Northwest Territories. The Department of Justice is mandated to handle policing and corrections services. However, these roles are now carried out in a way that respects community and Aboriginal values and encourages communities to take an active role in preventing crime and re-offending.

All correctional facilities have a designated space for healing circles and other traditional activities in that aid rehabilitation and healing. Elders were consulted in the design of both Yellowknife Correctional Centres. As well, traditional counsellors at the North Slave and South Mackenzie Correctional Centres provide one-on-one counselling, group counselling and support for various healing programs and initiatives. They also lead daily sweet grass ceremonies. Aboriginal Days are celebrated in each facility and annual harvesting of traditional healing plants can also be incorporated into correctional programs.

Wilderness camp programming also helps renew the offender's links with the land and cultural values, practices and traditions. Activities include canoeing, plant and animal identification, counselling on the land, fleshing and cleaning moose hides and trapping.

A Reintegration Demonstration Project in the South Mackenzie region provides additional support to offenders to use Aboriginal traditions. This programming may take place entirely in an Aboriginal language.
The Correctional Northern Recruitment Training Program, provided to all correctional staff, includes a section on cultural awareness and diversity. The Traditional Liaison Officers, or an elder from the community, will discuss traditional values and knowledge with recruits. And when

candidates participate in the program, they are oriented to the specific traditional programming used in their facility.

At youth correction facilities, weekly cultural information sessions, seasonal cultural camps, sharing circles, traditional cooking programs, igloo-building workshops, and Dene hand games are incorporated into programs and services provided at each facility.

As part of the Reintegration Project, correctional staff in the South Mackenzie have introduced additional avenues for community input and supports available to the offender. Through this project, which draws on cultural traditions specific to each offender, Community Reintegration Teams typically include community leaders, elders, justice committees and various community members identified by the offender. The Case Management Team and Community Reintegration Team meet monthly with the offender to discuss progress, identify concerns and develop release plans. Often, members of the Community Reintegration Team can talk with the offender in his or her own language.

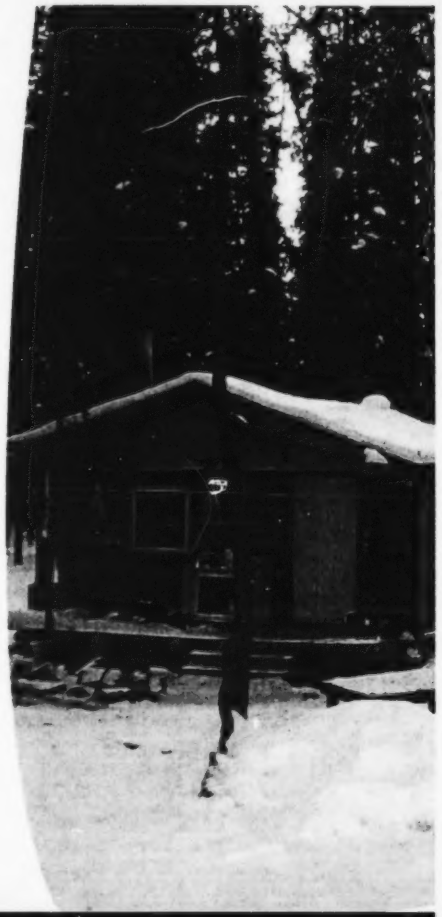
Some activities that encourage the use of Traditional Knowledge have also been incorporated into Community Corrections programs. Case plans can give offenders time on the land or the opportunity to engage in traditional activities like chopping wood for elders or assisting at feasts and traditional dances.

New staff who are not from a northern community are encouraged to spend time with respected local elders to become familiar with the culture and the community they are working in. Regional staff meetings are also sometimes held on the land or in smaller communities. These on-the-land meetings allow staff to become more familiar with the community and its traditions. In Inuvik and Fort McPherson, Corrections staff participate in Gwich'in wellness programs, helping launch them and promote them.

Community Justice Committees are active in almost all communities. These Committees promote development an alternative justice system using a

restorative approach. Communities may also choose to undertake healing or crime-prevention activities. Most Community Justice Committees include elders, and Aboriginal languages are used whenever appropriate and possible. Some cases can be dealt with outside the court system so that the offender does not have a criminal record. The offender will go before the Committee, talk about the crime and find a way to make amends to the community. These diversions, as they are known, may be done in Aboriginal languages.

Information for crime victims is available in all Aboriginal languages. Because most victims in the NWT are women, Victims Services encourages women to use traditional spiritual practices wherever appropriate. In 2006, the Yellowknife Victim Services Worker was honoured with a Wise Woman Award, in part for her use of traditional practices in counselling victims. A new program for men who use violence in intimate relationships is being developed. The interagency committee overseeing the program design has identified cultural considerations so that the program meets the needs of Aboriginal clients.



"Wilderness Camps"

Wilderness camps in the NWT Corrections system were first established more than 10 years ago as a way for offenders to reconnect with their Aboriginal heritage, reflect and hopefully heal.In some cases, after the initial observation and screening period, entire sentences are spent on the land.

A year-round camp was developed in Fort Smith. Traditional activities such as canoeing, hunting, trapping, preparing caribou and moose hides and setting nets for fishing are all part of activities that offenders learn. Contractors with extensive Traditional Knowledge, as well as mandatory first aid and other skills, operate the camp.

There's also a wilderness camp in the Sahtu region, on the Mackenzie River. A Fort Good Hope elder, who is also an alcohol, drug and grief counselor, operates the camp. Since 2006, this six-week program targets two offenders at a time, offering a great deal of one-to-one time with the counsellor as offenders relearn life on the land.

These camps offer a chance for the offenders to get reacquainted with Traditional Knowledge and living on the land.

One young man said attending the camp had given him a second chance to be Aboriginal again. He explained he was hesitant at first, feeling he would be judged because he had forgotten how to shoot a rifle, harvest a caribou – even drive a snowmobile. But, after being in the camp for several weeks, he reconnected once more to life on the land.

Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations (DAAIR), while not a program and service delivery department, plays a key role in implementing the Traditional Knowledge Policy.

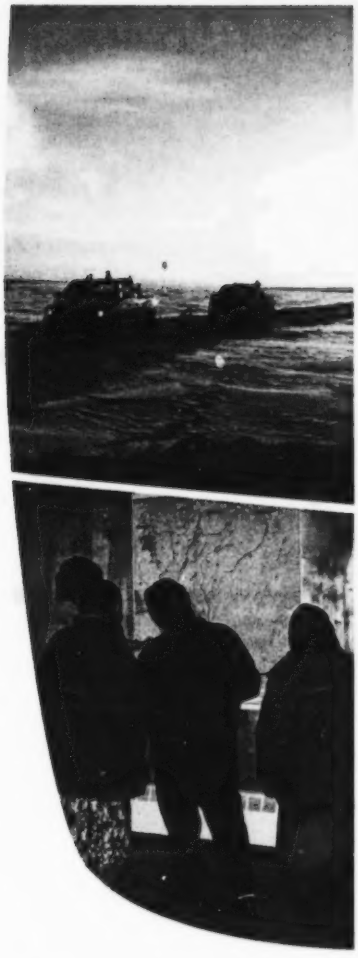
While DAAIR has limited opportunities to use Traditional Knowledge in its day to day business, the department facilitates and lays the basis for the GNWT and for Aboriginal governments to use, preserve and promote Traditional Knowledge. DAAIR does this through land claim and self-government negotiations and government-to-government relations.

"Examples of DAAIR's Work in Support of the GNWT's Traditional Knowledge Policy"

DAAIR, in collaboration with other departments, has developed a Consultation Framework to assist departments when consulting Aboriginal governments or organizations. The Consultation Framework guides departments in setting up consultation processes that give Aboriginal governments and organizations an opportunity to provide input prior to the GNWT making decisions. The input received from Aboriginal governments in consultation processes can include Traditional Knowledge and important cultural information. The Consultation Framework encourages departments to consider this information when making decisions.

At land, resources and self-government negotiations, DAAIR has been supportive of proposals by Aboriginal parties that empower them to preserve and promote their culture and traditions. For example, Délînê Self-Government negotiations have resulted in a proposed structure of government that includes an Elders' Council. The Elders' Council provides a mechanism for the Délînê government to consider the culture, traditions and Traditional Knowledge of Sahtu Dene Métis of Délînê.

Transportation



Gathering Traditional Knowledge is a regulatory requirement for acquiring approvals in some regions of the NWT. When the Department of Transportation (DOT) needs to build highways, bridges or ice roads, it too must go through the regulatory process.

Reflecting Traditional Knowledge in permit and licence applications is only required in the settlement regions, such as the Sahtu and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. However, the Department of Transportation strives to use Traditional Knowledge across the territory, wherever it can identify the appropriate Traditional Knowledge holders.

Traditional Knowledge can provide DOT with valuable information during project/programme planning and regulatory processes. Local people and elders can identify seasonal trends and wildlife behaviour. They can provide information on freeze/thaw cycles, permafrost locations and even gravel sites. They can also provide insight into areas supporting traditional use, so that such activities are impacted as little as possible by DOT works.

DOT uses that information to characterize wildlife or fisheries habitat, which at times can be invaluable.

For instance, DOT was studying locations for a culvert. The Department had ruled out one location as it initially appeared to be

a good fish habitat. However, after meeting with a local elder, it turned out to be anything but. The elder told DOT personnel that there were no fish there, and that it would be a good site for a culvert. Upon further exploration, it turned out the river went underground about 5-6 km from the location, and thus not habitable by fish.

By talking with members of the community in meetings and one-on-one, DOT gathers information, transcribes it and submits it along with its permit and/or licence application. The Department also informs project and program personnel, in order that relevant information can be incorporated into design and operational decision-making.

"Building the Mackenzie Valley Ice Road"

When preparing for the winter road season along the Mackenzie River, the Department of Transportation engaged community leaders in Fort Good Hope and Colville Lake to identify Traditional Knowledge holders in the area.

DOT required water and land use permits for the winter roads. Interviews with: elders and Traditional Knowledge holders proved invaluable in identifying appropriate sites along the winter road that could be used to extract water for flooding and spraying.

Through one-on-one interviews and group meetings, the Traditional Knowledge holders identified culturally sensitive areas, fish habitats, wildlife routes and even levels of water. They provided information on when to start building the road and when to maintain it, and where the best locations for water extraction were. That information was used to ensure proper maintenance of the road throughout the season.

Northwest Territories

Health and Social Services

The Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) and the regional Health and Social Services Authorities (HSSAs) have made great strides in weaving Traditional Knowledge with western medicine to create a stronger and better health care system.

Community Health Representatives (CHRs) are the link between a western medical system and traditional Aboriginal communities. Through CHRs, services are delivered in a culturally specific manner.

The Aboriginal Wellness Coordinator at the Stanton Territorial Health Authority coordinates the Aboriginal Wellness Program and language interpretation services. A committee of Aboriginal elders provides advice as necessary.

The DHSS Official Languages Consultant regularly provides training and information sessions to DHSS and HSSA staff about Aboriginal languages and the obligations of the HSS system under the NWT Official Languages Act.

The Arctic Health Research Network (AHRN) was established to find health solutions for Northern communities through the combination of TK and western medicine.

Culturally-relevant palliative care standards are also being developed for use in the NWT. The Dene Nation, working with DHSS Home Care and Long Term Care Health Planners and Authority representatives, is leading the project.
DHSS has approved the use of and begun implementing traditional healing practices

in its hospitals and health centres. This includes hiring liaison workers in hospitals, providing cultural awareness training to staff and allowing traditional ceremonies. These initiatives are a result of a review completed in 2005 of how traditional healing practices could be provided in a hospital setting.

Over a number of years, legislation has been passed which incorporates Traditional Knowledge practices.
For instance, under the NWT Midwifery Profession Act, the Midwifery Practice Framework incorporates respect for traditional and cultural birth practices, contributions of traditional midwifery and elders' teachings as part of midwifery practice.

The Child and Family Services Act was developed after extensive input from Aboriginal Governments and Aboriginal organizations. The Act maintains that decisions concerning children should be made with the best interests of children, recognizing that differing cultural values and practices must be respected in those decisions. It recognizes that a child's extended family can often provide important support in meeting the needs of the child. It also provides alternative methods for dealing with child protection concerns outside of the courts. The Act promotes direct community and family involvement in the decisions affecting children through various agreements and committees, all of which include Traditional Knowledge.

The Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act recognizes and supports Aboriginal adoption traditions and customs. Custom Adoption is a privately arranged adoption between two aboriginal families. There are no social workers or lawyers involved in a custom adoption. Adoption commissioners are appointed in each region. Their role is to make sure the adoption follows aboriginal customs.

Materials have been produced which include Traditional Knowledge practices

to guide health and social services care providers. A Community Counselling Program Toolkit was developed to include standards, resources and ideas on incorporating traditional healing methods. "The Seasonal Circle of Northern Life: a Different Way of Living Guidelines and DVD" was created with help from Aboriginal groups. These tools are used for orientation and continuing development training for health care providers.

"Traditional Healing in the Dehcho"

The practice of traditional healing has been historically and legally neglected since the first European colonists arrived in North America and established their own medical services. The impacts of residential schools and the establishment of colonial law and protocols have led to an unfortunate ignorance and confusion regarding traditional healing as well as an indigenous population that is confused about its heritage and the practices of these healers. HSS is involved in efforts to bring back this knowledge and give people of all ethnicities the opportunity to practice and benefit from it.

The Dene Nation, the Dehcho Health and Social Services Authority and DHSS are working together to develop a service model to deliver traditional healing services within the Dehcho.
The Dene Nation secured funding from Health Canada and developed the partnership to develop this service.

One major part of the project is to provide western medical and social services practitioners with orientation, training and experiences in Dene culture and traditional medicinal practices. This will help clients and western medical practitioners develop and experience an evolving working environment that will be more aware and sensitive to the culture of the majority of the population in the Dehcho. Outcomes of the project are expected to increase the health status of the region through greater cultural competence and safety.
One of the outcomes of the project will be an operations manual detailing policies, procedures and protocols. Copies will be made available to all health authorities in the NWT. Once they receive it, it will be for each region in the NWT to work with this model to make it culturally relevant for their respective regions.

Industry, Tourism and Investment

Traditional Knowledge is incorporated in various traditional economic, tourism, and resource development activities undertaken by the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI).

Traditional Knowledge is being used to develop a strategy for engaging Aboriginal communities in the tourism industry. While still in its early stages, ITI's Aboriginal Tourism Strategy will be developed in consultation with interested communities.

Each of ITI's regional offices has funding available to promote cultural aspects of its local communities, through ITI's Cultural Interpretation Initiative. In parks across the NWT, community members with Traditional Knowledge assist in the development of interpretive displays and trails. Parks often have interpretive signs that explain why a site is important, whom the site is named for and the history of the area and its people. All interpretive displays and trails are developed with the guidance of Traditional Knowledge holders from the respective community.

Another example of Traditional Knowledge use at ITI is in the Diavik Socio-Economic Agreement (SEA). The Diavik Communities Advisory Board (DCAB) was set up under the SEA to ensure that all employment and training opportunities at the mine are balanced by preserving traditional lifestyle and culture. DCAB is made up of representatives from the GNWT, Diavik Diamond Mines, the communities of Behchoko, Whati, Gameti, Wekweeti, Dettah, Ndilo,

Lutsel K'e, Kugluktuk, and the North Slave Métis Alliance. Board members monitor, evaluate and report on the impacts of the mine on key areas such traditional skills, languages, country foods and cultural activities. They also report on cultural sensitivity and cross-cultural awareness training at the Diavik Mine.

"Take a Kid Trapping Program"

In the Macke The Take a Kid Trapping Program is designed to introduce youth in the Northwest Territories to the traditional harvesting practices of hunting, trapping, fishing and outdoor survival.

The program is a product of the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Traditional Economy Division and is delivered through schools and Aboriginal organizations. The Departments of Municipal and Community Affairs and Environment and Natural Resources are contributing partners to the program.

Aboriginal instructors share Traditional Knowledge while demonstrating and incorporating visits to traplines, hands-on experience setting traps, snares and fishnets, traditional life skills, conservation teaching; and best practices in preparing pelts for market.

Twenty-four groups were taken out on the land between April 2007 and March 2009. Six students from Charles Tetcho School in Trout Lake took part in one such camp at Black Duck Creek. There, students learned about the importance of listening on the land, different kinds of traps, and safety practices associated with responsible trapping. Students harvested rabbits and learned how to prepare the meat. On the last day of camp, students demonstrated their new skills by preparing rabbit stew for members of the community. The camp was taught with the assistance of trappers from the Sambaa K'e Dene Band, and in partnership with the Sambaa K'e Development Corporation.

The Take a Kid Trapping program can be a precursor to more in-depth trapper training programs and is consistent with principals outlined in the NWT Wildlife Act, the NWT Trapping Regulations and the Agreement on International Humane Trap Standards. The delivery of this program is also consistent with the objectives of the Genuine Mackenzie Valley Fur Marketing Strategy.

Northwest Territories